crop into the market during the current rabi marketing season 1992-93, the allocation to Rajasthan for April and May, 1992 has not been reduced in view of the drought situation in the State.

Promotion avenues in NCCF

1979. SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that employees in NCCF have not been promoted to their next higher grade for the last 10 years inspite of a number of posts lying vacant there;

(b) whether it is also a fact that number of persons working on daily wage basis have not been regularised so far despite their having completed more than 10 years in NCCF; and

(c) if so, what action NCCF proposes to take in this regard to mitigate the hardships being faced by the employees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) The employees of the NCCF of India were being promoted to higher posts till January, 1985 as per their Service Regulations. No Promotions could be made after wards owing to the deteriorating financial condition of the Institution.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. As per the information available, 41 employees were appointed between 1982-87 who are working on daily wages/consolidated pay and on *ad hoc* basis in regular scales. Out of the said 41 *ad hoc* appointees 6 have opted for voluntary retirement. There is no proposal at present to regularise the services of the *ad hoc* employees in view of the need to reduce manpower and curtail administrative expenses.

Ban on open cast mining in upper Assam

1980. SHRI BHADRESHWAR BURAGOHAIN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in spite of the repeated objections by the public, open cast mining is going on unbated in the coal fields of upper Assam;

(b) whether any steps have so far been taken by Government to stop open cast mining; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) to (c) The issue of environmental degradation caused by open cast mining in Assam has been brought to the notice of the Central Government by various distinguished persons, organisations of Assam and Government of Assam. On the basis of complaints received the Ministry of Environment and Forests had constituted an Expert Committee in 1988 to look into the environmental problems arising out of coal mining operations being carried out by Coal India Limited. On the basis of recommendations of the Expert Committee, the Government decided to stop open cast mining at Tikak. The mining operations were stopped from 5-4-1990. Only restoration work is in progress. The various protection measures undertaken at Tikak OC are monitored by CIL, Government and the Assam Pollution Control Board etc. The Government of Assam have expressed satisfaction with the environmental protection measures undertaken at Tikak. The activities presently undertaken at Tikak are basically for restoration of damage caused to the land and improving environment in general. Tirap is the other opencast mine. The workings in this mine are below the drainage level and therefore the flow of any material to the agricultural land is not taking place. Proper drainage